

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PRS-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SAJ-01 /045 R

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R 161359Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

INFO USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, CH, TW, US

SUBJECT: USG COMMENT ON SCHLESINGER'S REMARKS ON MILITARY AID TO THE PRC

REF: TAIPEI 2427

1. APRIL 12 WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE AND PRESIDENT FORD'S APRIL 13 REMARKS ON SUBJECT WILL BE CARRIED IN WIRELESS FILE. DEPARTMENT HAS NOT COMMENTED ON WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE.
2. IN APRIL 14 APPEARANCE BEFORE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE THE SECRETARY ALSO ADDRESSED THE SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PRC. TEXT FOLLOWS BELOW. AS WIDESPREAD CIRCULATION OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS IS NOT DESIRED, YOU SHOULD TREAT IT AS FYI ONLY.

BEGIN TEXT

Q. SENATOR INOUE. MR. SECRETARY, AS YOU MUST BE AWARE, FORMER DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER SAID LAST SUNDAY THAT AMERICAN OFFICIALS DISCUSSED THE GRANTING OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

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ACCORDING TO THE PRESS THIS HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY

OFFICIALS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT. CAN YOU SHARE WITH US THE NATURE OF THESE DISCUSSIONS?

A. SECRETARY KISSINGER. WELL, I AM SURE THAT WHEN I LEAVE OFFICE MY RECOLLECTIONS WILL ALSO IMPROVE IN RELATION TO MY DISTANCE IN OFFICE.

AS THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT YESTERDAY TO A GROUP OF EDITORS, THERE WERE NO DISCUSSIONS OF THIS MATTER THAT EVER TOOK PLACE IN HIS PRESENCE. THERE COULD HAVE BEEN GENERAL DISCUSSIONS OF CONTINGENCIES THAT MIGHT ARISE OF VARIOUS KINDS OF CONFLICTS IN WHICH, OF COURSE, THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WOULD PARTICIPATE BUT I DON'T THINK THERE WAS ANY DISCUSSION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

Q. SENATOR INOUE. UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES OR WHAT CONTINGENCIES, AS YOU MENTIONED, WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THAT WE PARTICIPATE IN SOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA?

A. SECRETARY KISSINGER. I THINK THAT THIS IS AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX PROBLEM AND AN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE ONE IN WHICH THE CONTINGENCIES ARE VERY HARD TO PREDICT. THIS COULD, OF COURSE, BE A GRAVE MATTER IF THERE WERE A MASSIVE WAR BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA BUT THIS IS A CONTINGENCY THAT WE HOPE WILL NOT ARISE AND WHICH COULD HAVE INCALCUABLE CONSEQUENCES, BUT I REPEAT IT IS NOT A SITUATION IN WHICH WE HAVE EVER HAD FORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH AN ELEMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.
END TEXT ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, POLICIES, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE APPROPRIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE092411
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: BLEVIN:BDS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760145-0634
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760452/aaaabshy.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TAIPEI 2427
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <20 SEP 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: USG COMMENT ON SCHLESINGER'S REMARKS ON MILI- TARY AID TO THE PRC
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, CH, TW, US, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: TAIPEI
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006